

Mirasol Permit Action Fact Sheet

Background

The permit application was received for residential development, two 18-hole golf courses and a storm water management system. The proposed project also includes the construction of a three-mile long, 200-foot-wide and four-foot-deep flow way, running through Mirasol, as well as through other neighboring developments, and connecting to the Cocohatchee Canal, which discharges into the Gulf of Mexico at Wiggins Pass. The proposed flow-way is designed to alleviate flooding in the Estero and Cocohatchee Basins in Lee and Collier Counties. Regulatory Division is currently reviewing five permit applications, including Mirasol, that include or are adjacent to the proposed flow way.

Issues

The project would impact 587 acres of wetlands, 86.72 of which are directly affected by the flow way.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) characterized the project including the flow way as being too extensive and expressed concern over potential impacts from the flow way both in basin and upstream.

The flow way would alter the timing and distribution of freshwater flows to the downstream estuary. Flow way could potentially over-drain adjacent wetlands.

USEPA and the Corps disagree with applicant's modeling, which indicates flow way would create optimum water levels and hydro patterns for adjacent wetlands.

USEPA and the Corps agree that the flow way has no regional benefit. The Corps has determined that no additional technical documentation has been presented indicating that the flow way is needed to address regional flooding.

Decision

The Corps views the regional flow way as being nonessential to fulfill the purpose of the project and has determined that there are less damaging on site methods to minimize impacts. Therefore, the proposed project has been denied.

The permit applicant has 60 days to submit an appeal to this decision. The applicant may also choose to modify the project.

For further details on the Corps' Regulatory program, the appeal process and other related documents, please visit our web site at www.saj.usace.army.mil and click on "Hot Topics."